

# THE COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL.

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## THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, in obedience to the law of the 20th April, 1837, beg leave to submit to the Legislature their Third Annual Report.

THE Conventions directed by law to be attended by the Secretary of the Board, in each county of the Commonwealth, have been duly held. The presence of teachers, of the members of school committees, and of the friends of education, generally, at these meetings, is, of course, voluntary, and must, therefore, vary with circumstances. At several of the Conventions, there has been a gratifying attendance. Discussions on important subjects, connected with education, have been had at these meetings. Among the most prominent subjects considered, have been the education of children in factories; and the supply of books well adapted for the wants of the people, generally, and especially of the young. These discussions have, in many cases, been sustained in a manner, which evinces deep interest in the subjects considered. At the several county Conventions, addresses were delivered, by the Secretary of the Board, on the necessity of education, as a preparation for all the great personal and social duties. It is believed that, by the various exercises at these meetings, an increase of zeal has been produced, in that part of the community, to which we must most directly look for the improvement of our Schools.

The influence proceeding from these Conventions, is regarded as one of the most important instruments, which can be employed, for raising the standard of Common School Education. The great majority of the people unquestionably entertain proper feelings on the subject. They prize education as they ought, and wish their children to enjoy its advantages. Where the condition of the Schools is bad, and manifestly inadequate to the due preparation of the young for the duties of life, (as far as that preparation is to be acquired at places of education,) it may be presumed to result, in most cases, from ignorance of what has been accomplished in other parts of the Commonwealth, and might be effected in all, by proper exertions on the part of those, to whom this important trust is confided by law. Inasmuch as zeal on this subject is almost sure to follow in the train of intelligence, the Board know of no agency which can more safely be relied upon, to awaken and sustain the proper interest, than public meetings, in every part of the Commonwealth, at which the friends and conductors of education may have the opportunity of communicating to each other and the public, the results of their experience and observations. Such assemblies are entirely in accordance with the character of our political institutions, which aim to effect the great objects of human society, as far as possible, by the voluntary action of the people; and which look to the government, only for such measure of aid and organization, as is needed to call into the highest action, the enlightened sense of the community. It is confidently believed, that the manner in which the county Conventions have been attended, the character of the addresses, discussions, and pro-

ceedings, and the influences they have been calculated to exercise, are such, and such only, as were desired and intended by the Legislature, in passing the law, which makes it the duty of the Secretary to be present. No sectarian or party interest has, in any single case, been manifested; and those attending the meetings have come together, as on ground common to every good citizen. It may be regarded as by no means one of the least beneficial results of holding these Conventions, that they unite, in an object of permanent and sacred interest, all those who, however alienated from each other, in reference to other topics of public concernment, take a lively and a common interest in the welfare of the rising generation.

In the course of the past year, the Normal schools, or seminaries for the qualification of teachers, at Lexington and Barre, have gone into operation. The Board refer to their last Annual Report, for the detail of the steps taken, in the location of these institutions. As it was very important to secure the highest attainable degree of qualification, in the immediate superintendence of these schools, much time was unavoidably required for the selection and appointment of instructors. The arrangements for the school at Lexington were first completed, by the choice of Mr. Cyrus Pierce, who, at the time of his election, was engaged with uncommon success, as principal of the public school at Nantucket. The Normal school at Lexington, it will be recollected, was exclusively designed for females; and, as it went into operation at a season of the year, (the month of July,) when female teachers are generally under engagement in schools, the attendance the first term was not large. This circumstance, however, was the less to be regretted, as it enabled the principal of the school to proceed in its organization, with the caution desirable in an institution of a novel character in this country. After a vacation of two weeks, the second term commenced, about the middle of October, with a considerably increased attendance. The present number of pupils is twenty-one. At the same time, a model school, connected with the institution, was put into operation. This is a school attended by thirty pupils, of both sexes, between the ages of six and ten years, gathered from the several school districts in the town. This school is under the general superintendence of the principal of the Normal school, but is taught by the pupils of that institution. It is visited every day by the principal, as a listener and observer, and occasion for remark is taken, on the manner in which the duty of instruction is performed, by the pupils of the Normal school. Occasionally, the principal instructs the model school, in the presence of all the pupils of the Normal school, who consequently have the benefit of his example. The establishment of the model school is understood to have been very favorably viewed by the community, and a much larger number of children could have been obtained for it, had it been practicable to receive more to advantage.

The Normal school, at Barre, went into operation on the 4th of September, under the superintendence of Mr. S. P. Newman, who had for many years filled, with reputation, the office of a professor in Bowdoin College, in the State of Maine. The school at Barre, for reasons intimated in the last Annual Report, was opened for males and females, and thirty-nine pupils attended during the term. The resort was so great, that it was found necessary to employ an assistant teacher; but, as the schools kept for females are generally opened in the Spring, and as the larger part of the pupils are of that sex, it is presumed that a reduction of numbers will take place, at the third term.

It is supposed that a main cause, why the resort of pupils at Barre has been greater than at Lexington, is to be found in the circumstances, that both sexes have been admitted at Barre, and females only at Lexington; and that pupils have been received for a single term at the former place, and not at the latter. The course pursued on the first point, as was explained in the Report of the Board the last year, has been in conformity

with what was understood to be the public preference in the two places. The same reason existed for permitting a shorter term at Barre, united with a wish to ascertain, by the practical operation of the two plans, which will be entitled to preference, as the permanent rule. The Board is strongly inclined to the opinion, that a year, at least, should be passed at the Normal schools by each pupil ; but it may be found, on trial, that the advantages of a shorter term are sufficient to outweigh the obvious objections to it. A model school has not yet been organized at Barre ; but it is proposed to connect one with the Normal school, as soon as the requisite arrangements, for that purpose, can be effected.

The Board express themselves with entire approbation of the institutions at Lexington and Barre, with respect both to the fidelity with which instruction has been dispensed, and the disposition and capacity of the greater portion of the pupils. They feel that a degree of success, of the most gratifying character, has been realized, in both institutions. At an expense to the Commonwealth of less than one thousand dollars, for the past year, two seminaries, for the qualification of teachers, have been organized, in commodious buildings, with adequate libraries and apparatus, and under the superintendence of experienced and distinguished instructors. The combination of circumstances which has produced so desirable a result, by the application of so moderate a sum from the treasury, must be considered as an event peculiarly auspicious to the cause of education.

The instructions given in the Normal schools have, under the regulations adopted by the Board, been directed to the two great objects of an institution for the qualification of teachers, viz. 1st, to impart to the pupils a more correct and thorough knowledge of the various branches, required by law to be taught in our schools, and 2d, to teach the principles of communicating instruction, both in theory, and in practice at a model school, to be connected with the main institution.

The importance of these two branches of instruction, and their connection with each other, in a seminary for the qualification of teachers, is too obvious, to require an elaborate explanation. Few persons, who have been called to the performance of the duty of a member of a school committee, can have failed to observe, that, of those who offer themselves as teachers, a large number are destitute of an accurate and thorough acquaintance with the various branches of knowledge, required by law to be taught in the schools. They neither read nor write, well ; are deficient in the science of numbers ; and have an imperfect knowledge of the grammar of our language : but they have a foundation in all these branches. It is not to be expected, that a majority of the district school teachers in the State can afford the time, for a very long and thorough revision of the branches of knowledge, which they are required to teach. But it is, nevertheless, true, that much may be learned, even in a short time, passed with that particular object in view, in an institution expressly devoted to that object, and at an age when the mind has attained some maturity, and the moral motives to diligence are powerfully felt. There can be no doubt, it is believed, in the mind of any person practically acquainted with the subject, that if, of two persons of equal capacity, possessing beforehand the usual average proficiency in the branches to be taught, one should immediately take charge of a school, without any previous preparation, and the other should devote even so short a period as three months, to a diligent review of all those branches,—a review to be made under the direction, and with the aid, of an accomplished and faithful instructor,—the advantage would be greatly on the side of the last, in commencing his duties as a teacher.

But the art of instruction, that is, of communicating knowledge to the youthful mind, and aiding and encouraging its own efforts ; the art of governing a school, or rather, of so forming and influencing it, as to supersede the necessity of that mixture of harsh discipline and capricious indulgence,



which is called government, is also one of great difficulty and importance. It has its principles, which lie deep in the philosophy of our nature. Some of the best talent in several countries, for the last generation, has been employed in elucidating these principles. To comprehend them thoroughly, and with the ability to apply them practically, is the endowment of a gifted few. A thoroughly-accomplished teacher is as rarely to be met with, as an individual of the highest merit in any of the professions, or other most responsible callings in life. If these considerations, in one view of the subject, should lead us to despair of furnishing many of our schools with teachers of this description, they should lead us directly to the conclusion, that, for the practice of such an art, some specific preparation is far better than none. The preparation may be inadequate, but nothing is so bad as wholly to want preparation. Of two individuals, otherwise equally well qualified, and proposing to engage in the business of teaching school, if one should enter upon his duties, without any special instruction in them, and no guide but his own judgment, and the recollections of his own experience at school, (possibly an indifferent school,) while the other should pass even so short a period as three months, in an institution exclusively for the qualification of teachers, where he should be carefully instructed in the principles of teaching and governing a school, can there be a doubt, that the latter would be in a condition to give by far the greatest aid and encouragement to his pupils?

These strong and obvious considerations have, in other countries, led to the adoption of Normal schools, as a part of the regular system of public instruction, and it would seem that they are as decisive of the question of the utility of such institutions in America, as in Europe. They are the considerations, it is presumed, which led the Legislature promptly to engage in the experiment now in progress, and on which the attention of the friends of education throughout the country is anxiously fixed. The Board ask permission, in closing this part of their Report, to quote the words of one of the most distinguished philosophers of the age, on this subject. "We need an institution for the formation of better teachers; and, until this step is taken, we can make no important progress. The most crying want, in this Commonwealth, is the want of accomplished teachers. We boast of our schools; but our schools do comparatively little, for want of educated instructors. Without good teaching, a school is but a name. An institution for training men to train the young would be a fountain of living waters, sending forth streams to refresh present and future ages."\*

Great interest has been evinced, in the establishment of a Normal school in Plymouth county. As premises furnishing adequate accommodation were not to be obtained, in a convenient situation, it was deemed advisable, by those desirous of effecting the object, to raise a fund of ten thousand dollars for that purpose. The contributions toward this fund have been completed; but difficulties have arisen, as to the location of the school. This point has been referred to disinterested persons, not resident in the county. The efforts made to secure the establishment of this institution have been of the most praiseworthy character, and a zeal, never before witnessed in the cause of education, has been awakened in most of the towns in Plymouth county.

The last Annual Report contains a statement of the steps taken by the Board, to give effect to the act of the 12th of April, 1837, by which the school districts of the Commonwealth were authorized to form school libraries, by a small annual appropriation for the purchase of books. In the course of the year, ten volumes have been published by Messrs. Marsh, Capen, Lyon, and Webb, under the sanction of the Board, being the first ten of a series, to be issued under the name of the 'School Library.' Other volumes will follow as rapidly as they can pass through the press. In giving their joint sanction to the volumes thus published, nothing was further

\* Rev. Dr. Channing.

from the intentions of the Board, than to attempt any control over the free choice of the committees, employed to purchase books for the district libraries. But it is well known to all, who have turned their thoughts to the subject, that an ample supply of instructive books, in the various departments of useful knowledge, does not exist throughout the community. The establishment of social libraries, in the various towns of the Commonwealth, has ever been deemed very desirable ; and, since increased attention has been turned to the subject of education, of late years, it has been universally admitted, that the collection of a district School Library, in each district, is an object scarcely inferior in importance to the support of the school. In fact, it is essentially a part of the School System ; for to what avail are our children taught to read, if good books are not accessible to them ? It was doubtless in this view of the subject, that the Legislature of the Commonwealth, following the example which had been recently set in New York, (a State, whose enlightened and liberal care of the interests of education is entitled to the highest praise,) was induced, in the law already alluded to, to authorize a small annual appropriation for the purchase of School Libraries, *by those districts disposed to make it*. It was no part of the design of the Legislature, to limit the discretion of the school committees, in making the selection ; nor have the Board of Education, in sanctioning the publication of a series of works well adapted for School Libraries, designed or attempted any interference with the free choice of the committees. They have as little wish as right, to exercise such dictation. They have supposed, however, that it would be an acceptable service to committees, hesitating in the multitude of publications daily sent forth from the press,—often forced on their notice by itinerant venders,—to have a selection of volumes recommended to them by a body of individuals, who cannot be suspected of any selfish interest, and whose unanimous approval of each volume excludes the possibility of the intrusion of sectarian, or party prejudices. If the members of the Board may be permitted to judge of the wants and wishes of their fellow-citizens, by what they have experienced, individually, as parents and school-committee men, such a recommendation, claiming no other character than that of a suggestion, to be adopted or rejected by those concerned, cannot prove other than acceptable. It will still remain, equally as before, within the option of school committees, to purchase such books as they may think best adapted to the wants of their districts. They may purchase those recommended by the Board ; or give the preference to other selections, prepared in other places ; or they may make a free choice themselves, out of the almost innumerable volumes daily appearing.

The Board believe, also, that the inspection of the volumes already published, and of the titles of those proposed, (a list of which is subjoined,) will effectually remove all apprehension which may have been felt, that the sanction, by the Board, of books suitable for a School Library, might have a sinister effect, either positive or negative, in reference to religious instruction. While the organization of the Board is itself, (it is hoped,) a sufficient guaranty, that no such influence could be designed, the examination of the books already published, and of the list of those in preparation, will sufficiently show, that no such effect has ever, by inadvertence, taken place. The subject of religious instruction has been placed, by the Legislature of the Commonwealth, where public sentiment, and the necessity of the case, would place it and keep it, even without legislation. In a community, where the utmost liberty of religious profession exists, where it is the dearest birthright of every man, that he may worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, any attempt to make the public schools, (supported, as they are, by the common expense for the common benefit,) an instrument for advancing or depressing the opinions of any sect of Christians, would meet what it would merit, the prompt rebuke of every considerate citizen. Although it may not be easy, theoretically, to draw the line between those

views of religious truth and of Christian faith, which are common to all, and may, therefore, with propriety be inculcated in school, and those which, being peculiar to individual sects, are, therefore, by law excluded ; still it is believed, that no practical difficulty occurs in the conduct of our schools, in this respect. It is the general sentiment of the people of all denominations, that religious instruction shall be left to parents at the fireside, and to the religious teachers, to whose ministrations parents and guardians may choose to confide their own spiritual guidance, and that of those dependent on them. The Legislature, therefore, has but acted in accordance with the sense of the community, in prescribing that no books shall be directed by school committees, to be purchased, or used, in any of the town schools, "which are calculated to favor the tenets of any particular sect of Christians."

Although the School Library, whose publication has been sanctioned by the Board, does not consist of school books, or books to be used in schools, it has still been considered, that the spirit of the law applies equally to the books to be purchased for school libraries, and this principle has governed the Board, in giving their recommendation. They have not supposed, that books for religious instruction (strictly so called) were in the contemplation of the Legislature, in authorizing the formation of school libraries, but works of useful knowledge and general science ; not excluding, however, those, in which scientific research is made subservient to the establishment and illustration of moral and religious truth. But, if in this they have mistaken the design of the Legislature ; if theological works were within the purview of the law authorizing the formation of district libraries ; and if the restriction on school books, just alluded to, is inapplicable to the library books ; it will be in the power of school committees, that desire it, to obtain books of that description for the school libraries. The Board of Education attempts no interference with this course, however strong their opinion of its inexpediency and illegality.

With these explanations, the attention of the Legislature, of the friends of education, and the public generally, is invited to the volumes already published, which may serve as a fair specimen of the whole. It will be seen, that they are recommended, in the first place, by great neatness of execution, and by being afforded at a price, which, considering the style of the typography, must be considered very reasonable. The Board attach some importance to these circumstances, believing that the formation of a taste for reading, in the community, depends, to a considerable degree, on a supply of books, at a moderate price, which are correctly printed, and can be read with ease. Could the distaste for books, sometimes manifested by young persons whose character is not formed, be traced to its source, it might, no doubt, in many cases, be found in the repulsive exterior, obscure type, unsightly paper, and incorrect printing, of the few books within their reach. The books recommended by the Board, without any pretensions to typographical luxury, are free from all these objections.

With respect to the more important point, of the subjects of the books, it is believed, they are, without exception, such as a Christian parent would approve. It has not been possible to proceed on a systematic plan, in giving, in the first ten volumes, a proportionate share to every branch of knowledge. Still, there will be found to be a due degree of variety in their contents. The Natural Theology of Paley, with the illustrations and supplements of Sir Charles Bell and Lord Brougham, and the notes of Dr. Elisha Bartlett, by whom the present edition is prepared, is contained in two of the volumes. Nothing need be said in commendation of this great work, in which the fundamental truths of natural religion are placed on a basis which can never be shaken, and set forth with a beauty and variety of illustration never surpassed. An abridgment of Mr. Irving's Life of Columbus has been prepared for this Series, by its distinguished author, and is contained in another



of the volumes already published. Three volumes, selected from Sparks's Library of American Biography, contain the lives of many of the most distinguished statesmen and heroes of our country. Four volumes of the Sacred Philosophy of the Seasons, by Dr. Henry Duncan, of Scotland, have been prepared for the School Library, by the Rev. Dr. Greenwood; and will be found to contain the most interesting and instructive views of almost all the phenomena of the natural world.

For a fuller exposition of the views of the Board, as to the importance of this attempt to promote the formation of School Libraries, and of the principles on which their sanction has been given to the works published, reference is respectfully made to the Introductory Essay, prepared by a member of the Board, and prefixed to the first volume. They will only here ask leave to remark, that, while they confidently believe that the volumes which have been and may be published, under their sanction, will be found of a pure and salutary moral tendency, well adapted to feed and strengthen the appetite for useful knowledge, and entirely free from every thing which could corrupt or mislead the youthful mind; they do not desire, as individuals, to be considered responsible for every opinion, or shade of opinion, that may be expressed in the volumes. It would not be possible for any person, or any number of persons, in any capacity, to select a library of books for family or school use, of which every volume, in every sentence, should faithfully reflect the precise opinions of the individual or individuals making the selection.

The Board beg leave, in this connection, to submit to the Legislature the expediency, in order to the further encouragement of the formation of School Libraries, of allowing to the several school districts, out of the income of the School Fund, a sum equal to that which may be appropriated by the district, not exceeding ten dollars per annum to any district, the whole to be expended at the discretion of the school committee. A similar measure has been adopted, it is understood, in New York, and with the best effect.

It is a part of the duty of the Board, prescribed by law, to prepare and lay before the Legislature, in a printed form, on or before the second Wednesday in January, annually, an abstract of the School Returns received by the Secretary of the Commonwealth. This duty has, according to law, been laboriously and faithfully performed, in the office of the Secretary of State, under the superintendence of the Secretary of the Board.\*

The attention of the Legislature is particularly invited to this abstract. In addition to the usual statistical facts, which are required by law to be embraced in the returns, extracts from the reports of the school committees will be found, in many cases, appended to the digest of the returns of the several towns. These extracts have been taken, with great labor, by the Secretary of the Board, from the copies of the reports of the school committees, required by law to be transmitted, with the returns, to the office of the Secretary of State. It is believed that these extracts will give a considerably increased interest and value to the annual abstract of the returns. They present the views of the school committees of the Commonwealth, on the subject of education in their several towns, the condition of their schools, and the measures deemed advisable or practicable by the committees, for their improvement. These reports of the school committees are entitled to the highest respect, inasmuch as they are the utterance of the voice of the people, on the all-important subject of the education of their children, expressed through the organs of their own immediate choice. It will appear, conclusively, from the extracts given from these reports, that the recent legislation of the Commonwealth, having for its object the improvement of the Com-

\*The greater part of the work, mentioned in the Report of the Secretary of State of the 1st January, 1840, as being done in his office, for the Board of Education, was performed in the preparation of the statistical tables of the Abstract of the School Returns, under the law of 13th April, 1838.

mon Schools ; the measures adopted by the Board, under the sanction, or by the direction, of the General Court, to carry that legislation into effect ; and the general suggestions, which have proceeded from the Board, on the subject of the schools, and the improvements desirable or practicable in their condition ; are fully sustained by the school committees of the Commonwealth, as far as can be judged from the reports, of which copies have been transmitted to the office of the Secretary of State. Believing the citizens, who faithfully perform the duties of school-committee men, to be benefactors of the public, in the highest sense of the word, the Board cannot but express their own feeling of obligation to that portion of them, whose reports they have had the opportunity of consulting. The views and opinions contained in them are submitted to the Legislature, with full confidence that they will receive respectful consideration, and be found to give a value to the annual abstract, which it has not possessed in any former year.

During the past year, a semi-monthly journal, expressly devoted to the subject of education, entitled 'The Common School Journal,' has been published, under the editorship of the Secretary of the Board. Twenty-four numbers of this journal have appeared. The Board have no official connection with this publication ; but they beg leave to express the opinion, that it will be found a valuable repository of documents on the subject of education, and an important auxiliary to the efforts made for its improvement.

For the discussion of other topics, connected with this subject, and, particularly, that of the existing supply of books in the community, the Board would refer to the report of their Secretary, which is herewith submitted. In conclusion, they would invoke the continued attention of the Legislature to the great interests of that Common School education, which, as far as human means go, is the foundation of our prosperity as a people. It is not intended to utter any sentiment unfriendly to our higher seminaries of education. They, too, are the creation of the people, early called into being, to supply the demands of the public service in the various relations of life ; and they have been steadily countenanced, and liberally endowed, in all periods of our history. By the Constitution of the State, it is made the duty of "Legislatures and Magistrates, in all future periods of the Commonwealth, to cherish the interests of literature and the sciences, and all seminaries of them ; especially the University of Cambridge," (the only collegiate institution then in existence,) "public schools, and grammar schools in the towns." But, without instituting any invidious comparison between the different classes of institutions for education ; and firmly believing, that the colleges and schools are the best friends of each other, and prosper most where they prosper together ; the Board would still respectfully submit the opinion, that the improvement of the Common Schools is emphatically, and, in the first instance, the concern of the people. They are intended for the children of the whole community, while, comparatively, a small number receive a college education. The elementary school must be placed at the door of the individual citizen, or, at least, in the centre of the village, or many of those for whom it is intended, will fail to enjoy its benefits. While it is also desirable, that the means of a collegiate education should be as widely diffused as is possible, without lowering its standard, it must, of necessity, in almost all cases, be sought at some distance from home, and, if not found in one place, it may be obtained at another. For this reason, the state of the higher seminaries of learning does not, of necessity, determine the character of a community, even in reference to those branches of education for which they are provided. Not so with the Common Schools. Their condition is an infallible index of that of the community. Never was there a prosperous, virtuous, intelligent people, where the schools were in a languishing condition. They furnish the keys of knowledge to the mass of the people. They are the only avenue, by which the majority of the rising generation are able, as they grow up, to make



their way into life, prepared to discharge its duties, and fulfil its relations, with ease and credit to themselves, and with advantage to society.

The Board rejoice in the conviction, that this is a cause, which makes no appeal to sectarian or party feeling. It has hitherto proved a neutral ground, amidst all the collisions of judgment on other subjects. It appears to have been instinctively felt, by all good citizens, that the Common School system required their united support, and that, if once drawn into the vortex of party, it must sink. It has been the earnest endeavor of the Board to act, in all respects, in accordance with this principle; and they have the satisfaction to state, that, as far as their agency and means of observation extend, it exists and operates on the minds of the people, with unimpaired vigor.

It has also been to them a source of satisfaction, to observe the interest manifested in several of our sister States, and in foreign countries, in the efforts which have been made, of late years, in this Commonwealth, to raise the standard of popular education. While Massachusetts has followed the example of New York and Connecticut, in the establishment of a school fund; her own educational legislation and measures, particularly those relating to Normal schools, are watched, with anxiety, in many of the other States. It has always been the boast of our ancient Commonwealth, that the education of the young has been an object of peculiar care; and, if she would sustain her enviable reputation in this respect, she must permit no relaxation of the zeal which has hitherto animated her. The cause of education is eminently the cause of the age; and the impression is gaining strength, both in Europe and in this country, that it is only by raising the standard of education, that the social, political, and moral, condition of the people can be improved.

But all measures, designed to promote education, must depend, for their success in this country, on the hearty coöperation of public opinion. It is only by enlightening and concentrating that opinion, that powerful effects can be produced. This is most effectually to be done, by persevering appeals to the understanding of the people, by placing the subject in every proper form of arrangement and persuasion, before the public mind, and by giving publicity to the facts, which prove the defects in the system, as existing in some portions of the Commonwealth, and the great excellence to which it is brought in other portions; thus encouraging a generous emulation, where nothing but good can result from the effort to excel. In the growing attention already bestowed on the subject, the Board behold the assurance of much good actually accomplished, and an encouragement, under the direction of the Legislature, to an increased zeal in the discharge of their duties.

EDWARD EVERETT,  
GEORGE HULL,  
EDMUND DWIGHT,  
GEORGE PUTNAM,  
ROBERT RANTOUL, JR.,  
THOMAS ROBBINS,  
JARED SPARKS,  
CHARLES HUDSON,  
GEORGE N. BRIGGS,  
W. G. BATES.

*Boston, 27th December, 1839.*

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The annexed advertisement of the Publishers of the School Library is subjoined, in an abridged form. It contains the list of the books published, and of those in preparation.

## THE SCHOOL LIBRARY.

MARSH, CAPEN, LYON, AND WEBB, 109, Washington street, Boston, are now publishing, under the sanction of the Massachusetts Board of Education, a collection of original and selected works, entitled, 'THE SCHOOL LIBRARY.'

The LIBRARY will embrace two series, of fifty volumes each ; the one to be in 18mo., averaging from 250 to 280 pages per volume ; the other in 12 mo., each volume containing from 350 to 400 pages. The former, or *Juvenile Series*, is intended for children of ten or twelve years of age and under ; the latter for individuals of that age, and *upwards*,—in other words, for advanced scholars and their parents.

The LIBRARY is to consist of *reading*, and not *school*, *class*, or *text*, books ; the design being to furnish youth with suitable works for perusal during their leisure hours ; works that will interest, as well as instruct them, and of such a character, that they will turn to them with pleasure, when it is desirable to unbend from the studies of the schoolroom.

The plan will embrace every department of Science and Literature, preference being given to works relating to our own country, and illustrative of the history, institutions, manners, customs, &c., of our own people. Being intended for the *whole* community, no work of a sectarian or denominational character in religion, or of a partisan character in politics, will be admitted.

The aim will be to clothe the subjects discussed, in a popular garb, that they may prove so attractive, as to lure the child onwards, fix his attention, and induce him, subsequently, to seek information from other and more recondite works, which, if put into his hands at the onset, would alarm him, and induce a disgust for that which would appear dry and unintelligible, and, of course, uninteresting.

The intention is not to provide information for any one class, to the exclusion of others, but to disseminate knowledge among all classes. The Publishers wish the children of the Farmer, the Merchant, the Manufacturer, the Mechanic, the Laborer,—all to profit by the lights of science and literature, that they may be rendered the more virtuous and happy, and become more useful to themselves, to one another, to the community, and mankind at large. To accomplish this desirable end, the LIBRARY will embrace so wide a range of subjects, that every child may find something which will prove useful and profitable to him, whatever his situation, circumstances, or pursuits, in afterlife, may be.

The project is one of great extent, and vast importance ; and, if properly carried out, must become of inestimable value to the young. Whether the anticipations of the Publishers, with regard to it, will be verified, time must determine ; but, from the intellectual and moral, theoretical and practical, character of those who have engaged to aid in the undertaking, they have good grounds for presuming that much will be accomplished, and that, by their united efforts, many obstacles, now existing to the mental, moral, and physical, improvement of youth, will be removed, or, at least, be rendered more easily surmountable.

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